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Shankarraman

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(54) **REAL-TIME PLACESHIFTING OF MEDIA CONTENT TO PAIRED DEVICES**

H04L 67/2804 (2013.01); *H04L 67/24* (2013.01); *H04L 69/04* (2013.01)

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CPC *H04L 65/1069*; *H04L 65/4076*; *H04L 65/4084*; *H04L 65/601*; *H04L 67/104*; *H04L 67/2804*; *H04L 67/24*; *H04L 69/04*
USPC 709/228
See application file for complete search history.

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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(21) Appl. No.: **16/127,048**

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(22) Filed: **Sep. 10, 2018**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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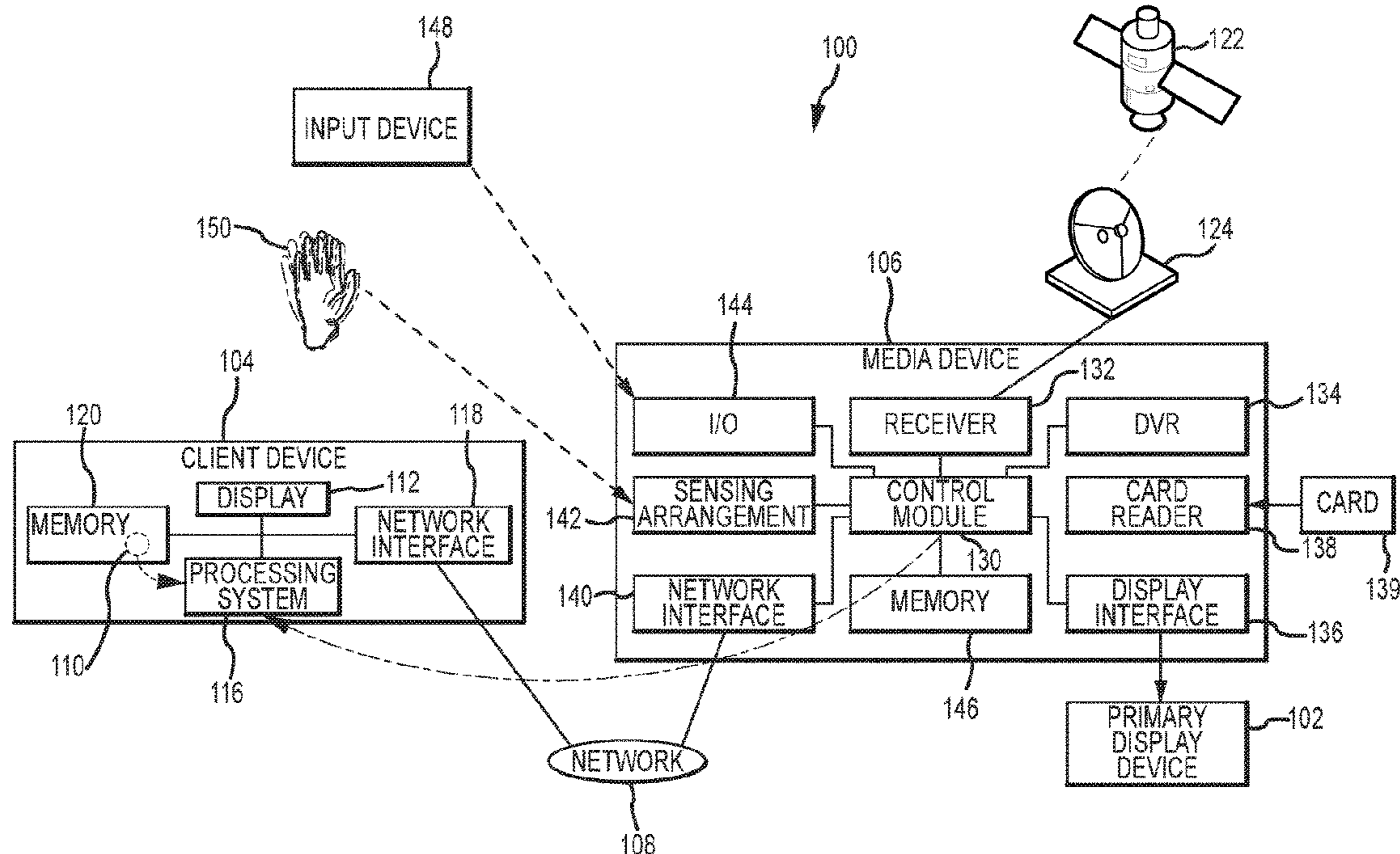
(57) **ABSTRACT**

Methods, devices, and systems are provided for placeshifting a media program. An exemplary method involves a media device storing identification information for a client device coupled to a network and receiving a request to transfer a media program available for presentation on a primary display device in a first format via the media device. In response to the request, a peer-to-peer communication session with the client device over the network is established using the identification information and an encoded content stream corresponding to the media program is transferred to the client device via the peer-to-peer communication session.

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H04L 29/06 (2006.01)
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(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *H04L 65/1069* (2013.01); *H04L 65/4076* (2013.01); *H04L 65/4084* (2013.01); *H04L 65/601* (2013.01); *H04L 67/104* (2013.01);

19 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



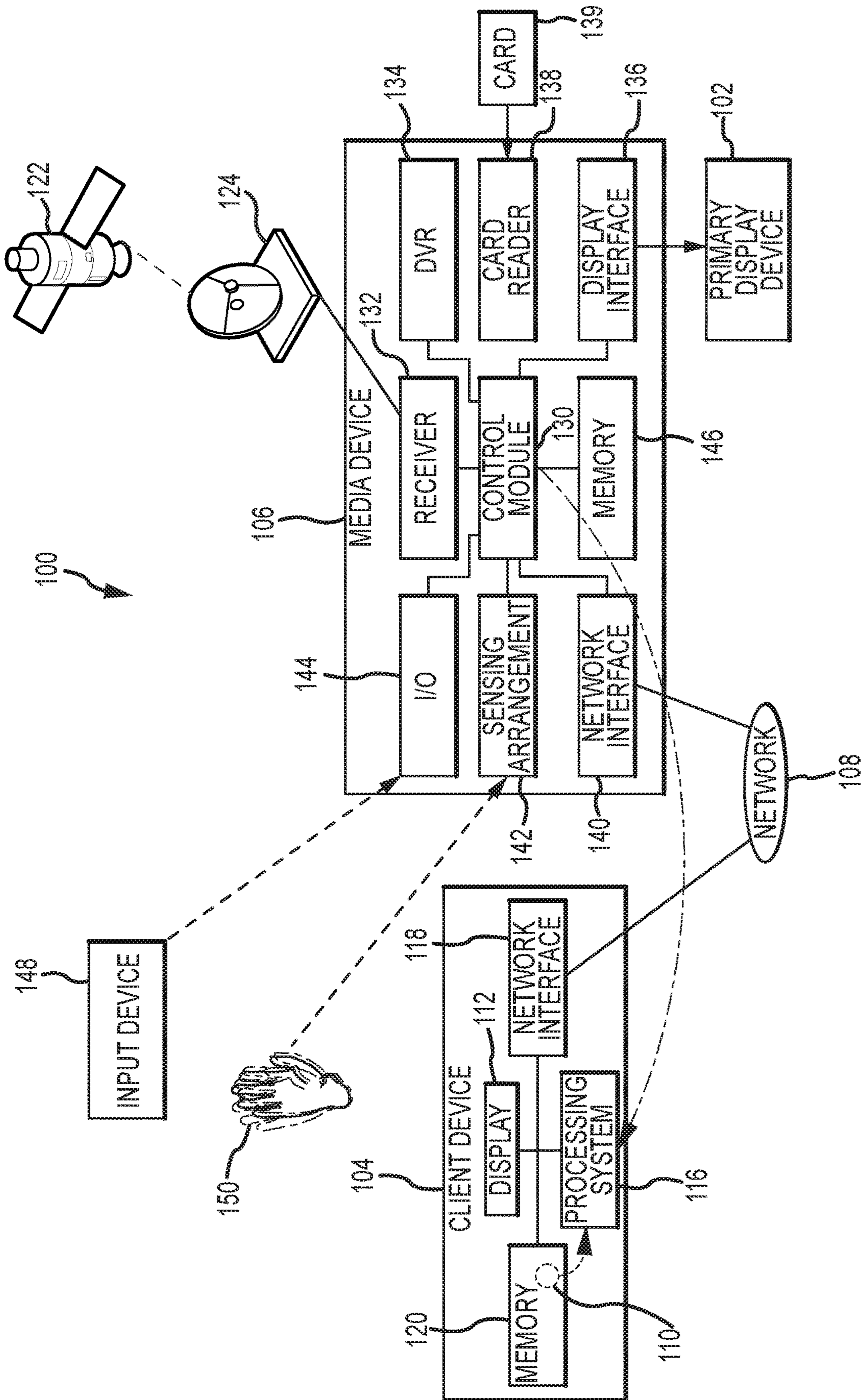


FIG. 1

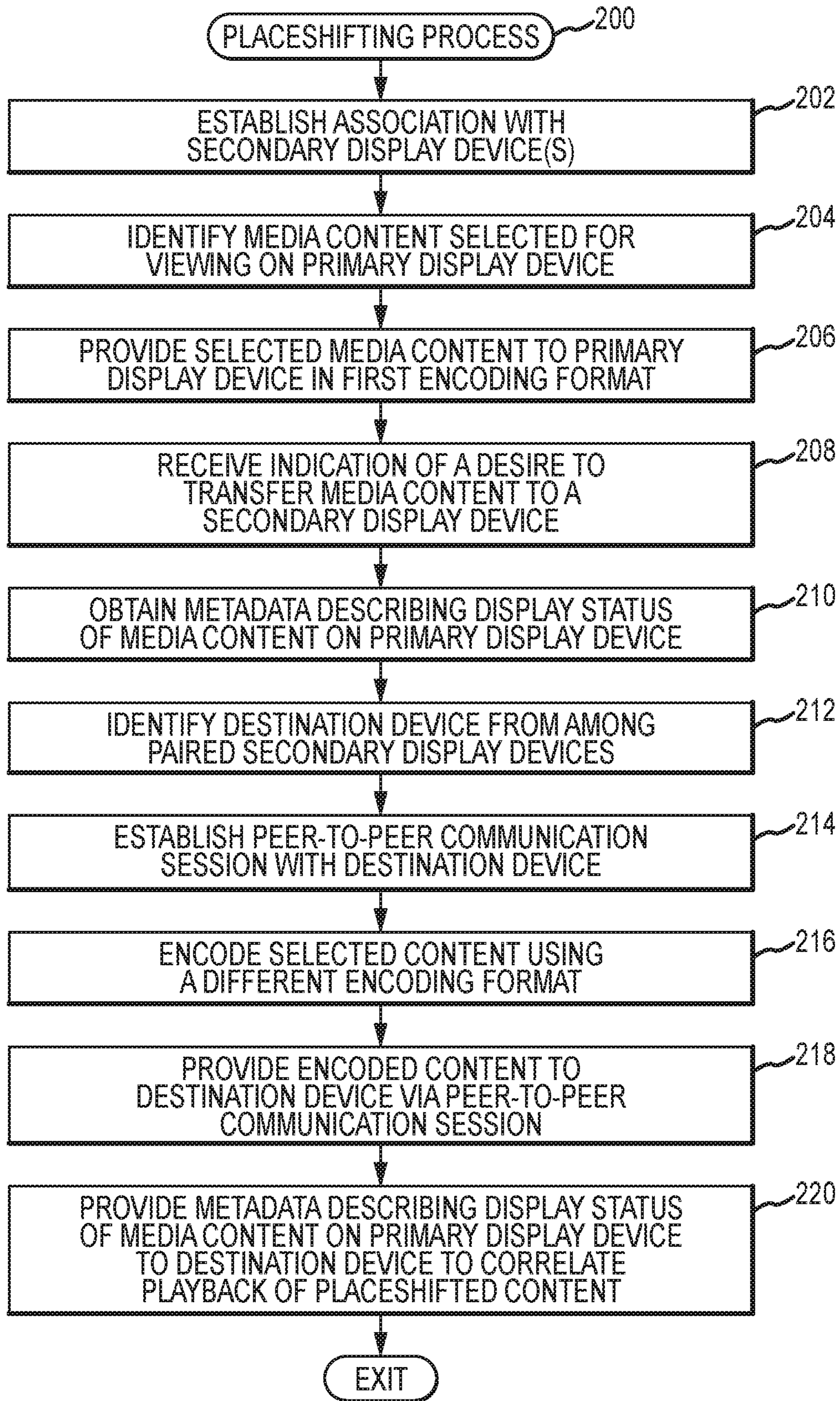


FIG. 2

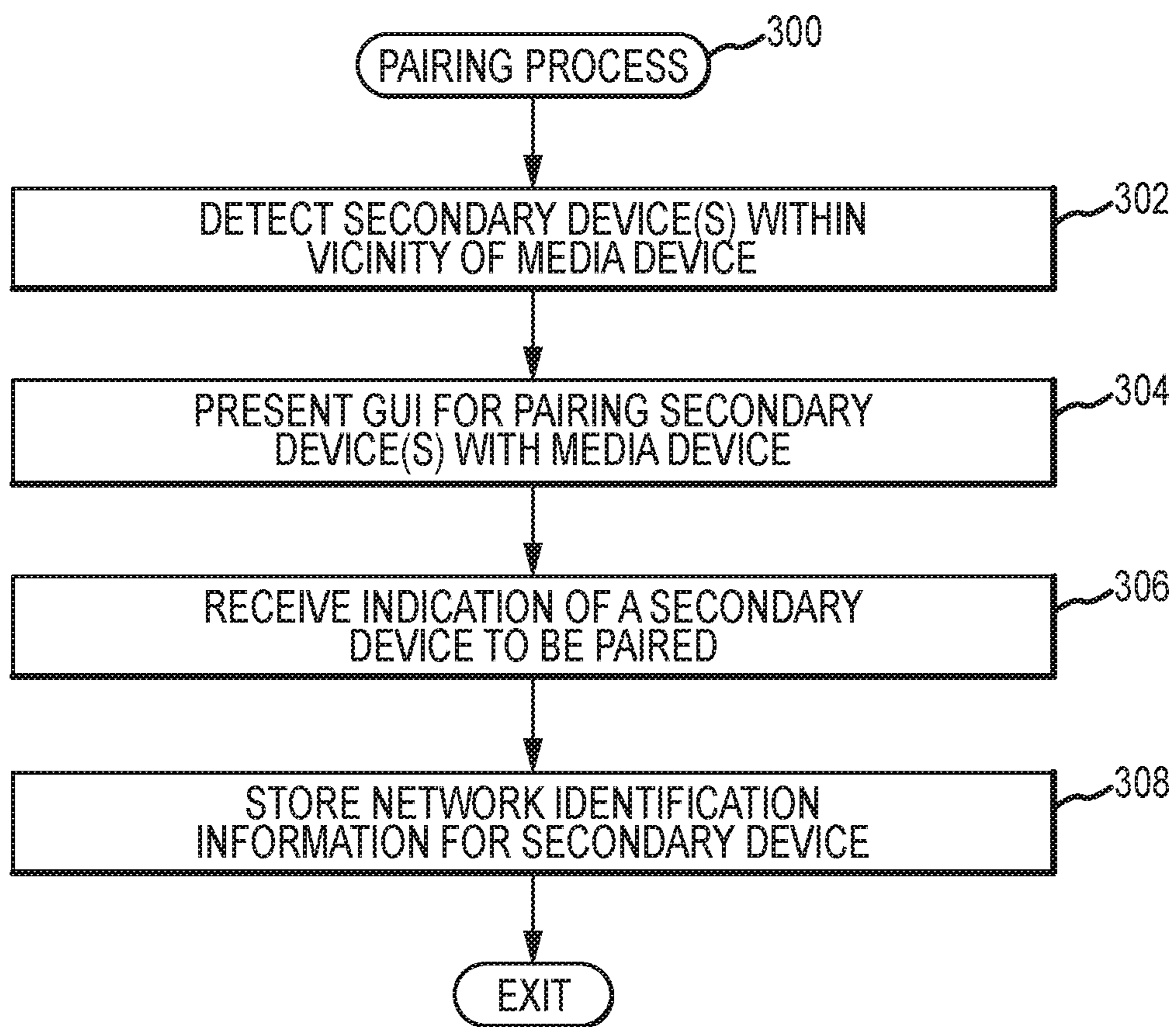


FIG.3

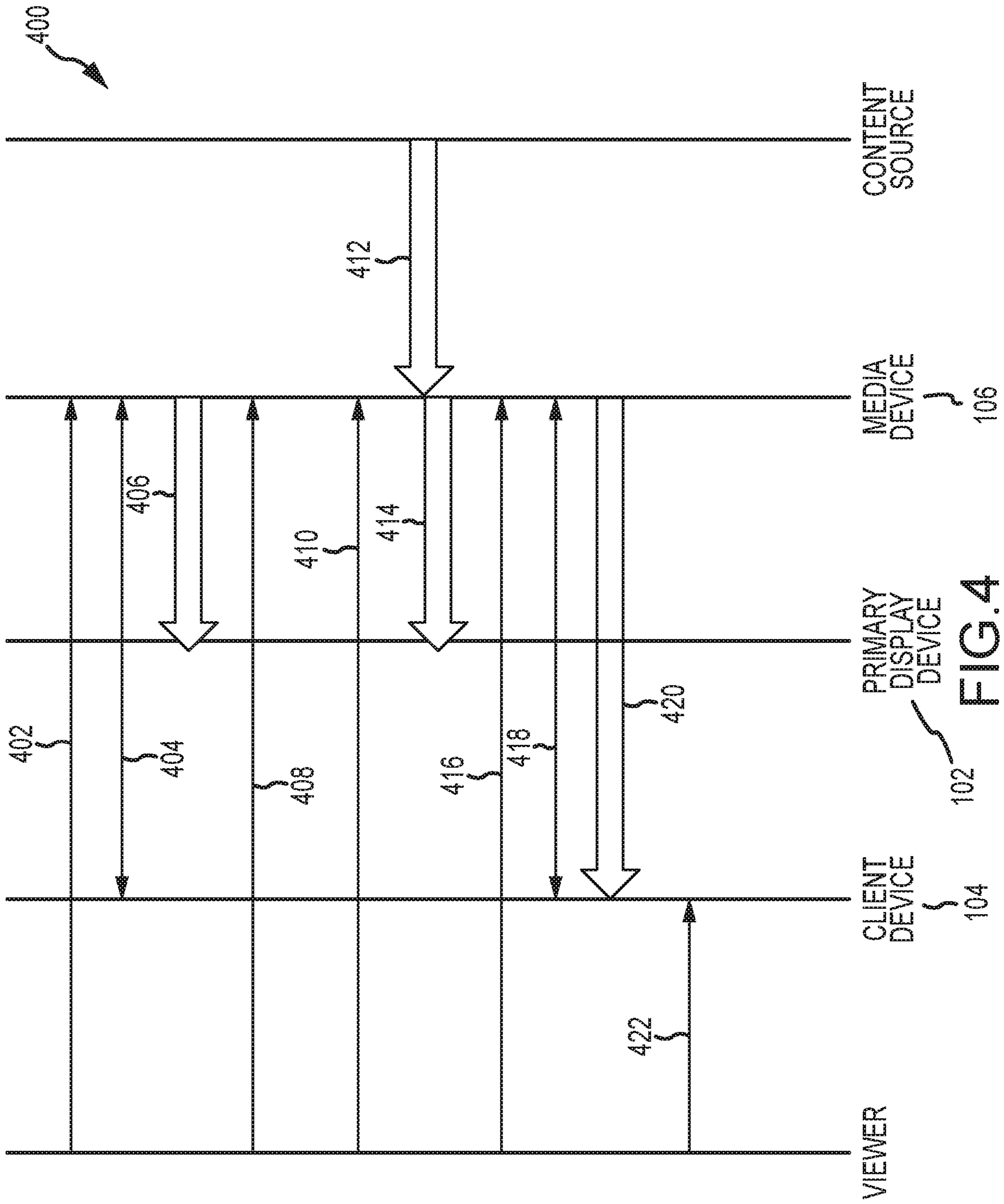


FIG. 4

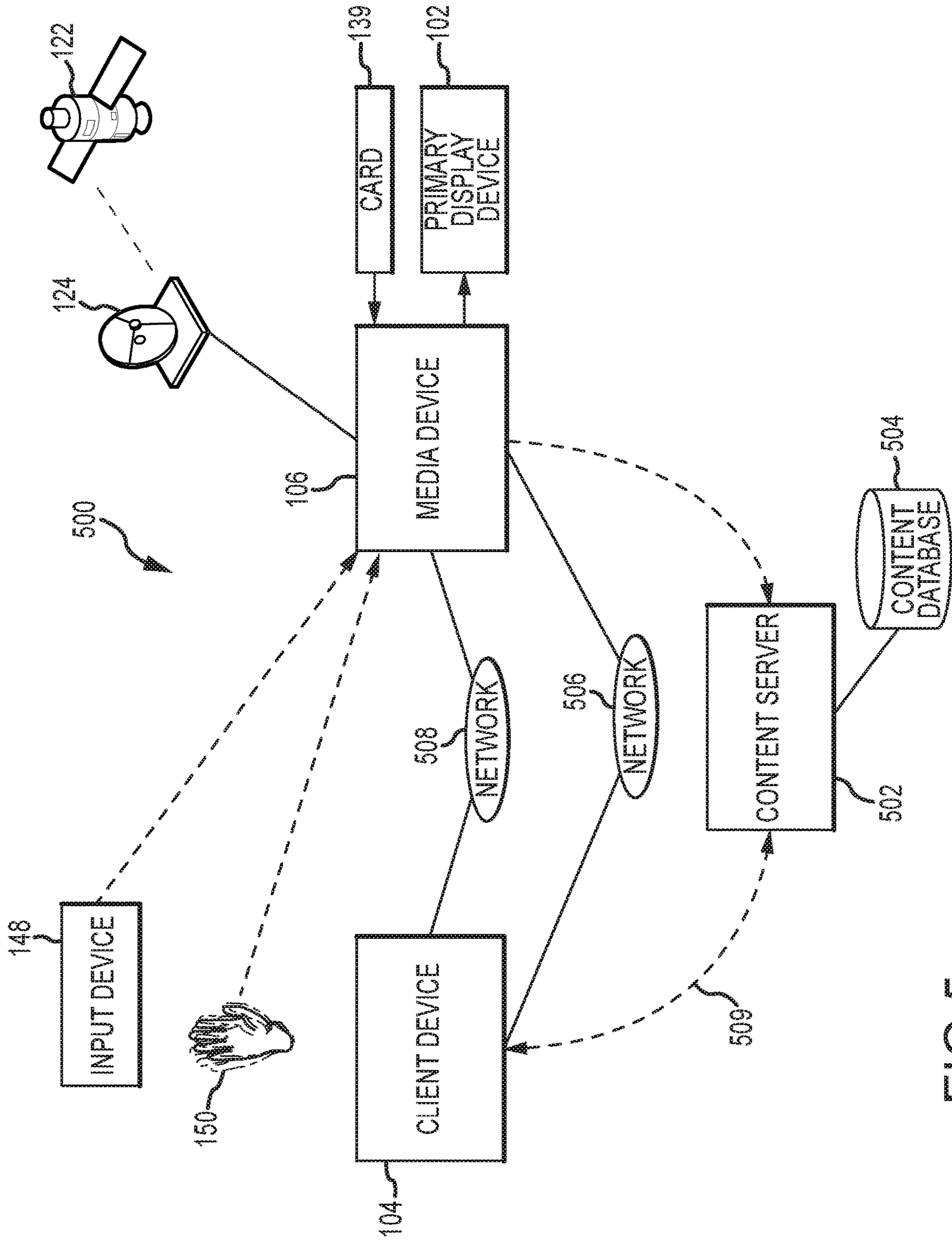


FIG. 5

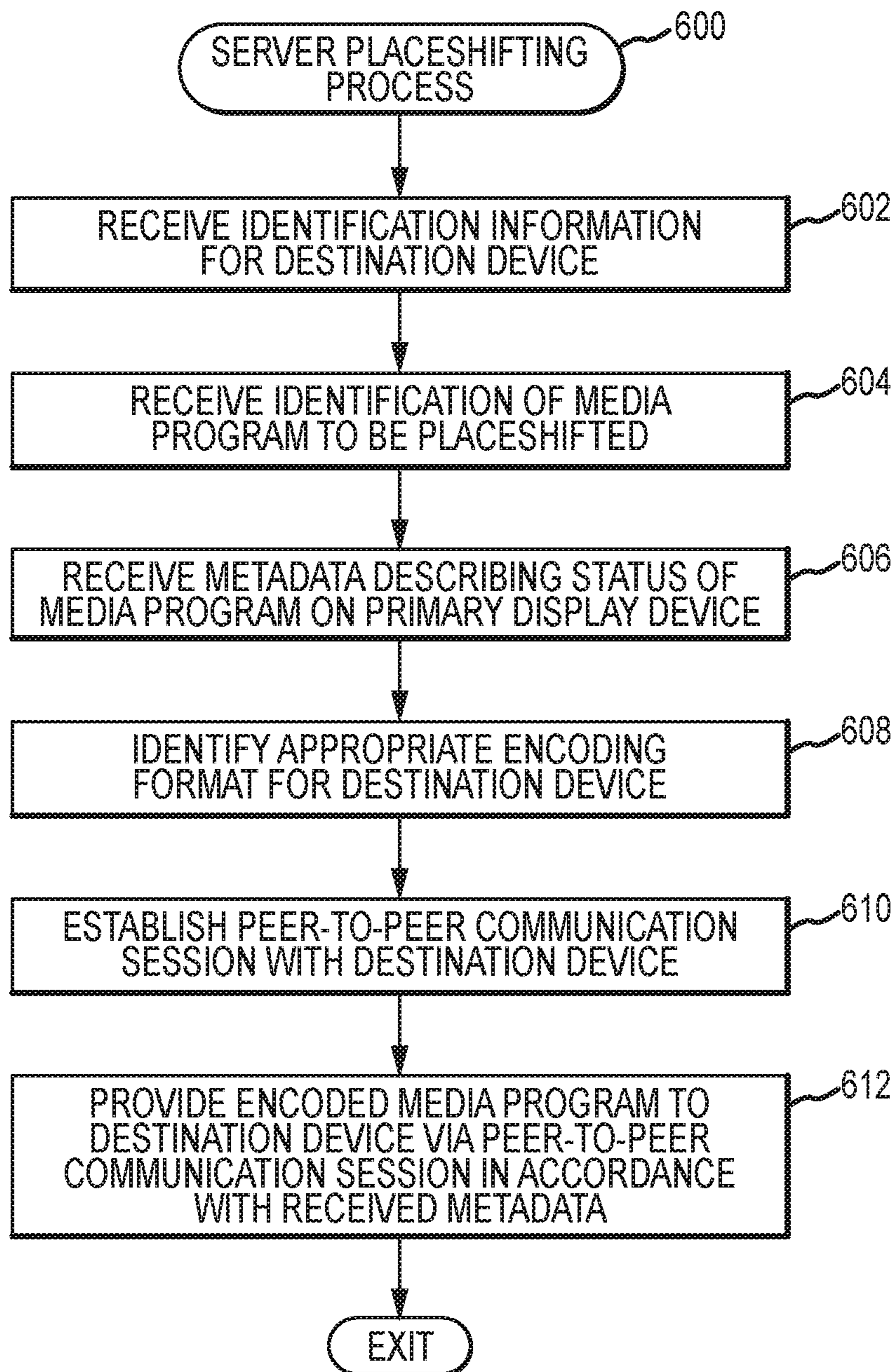
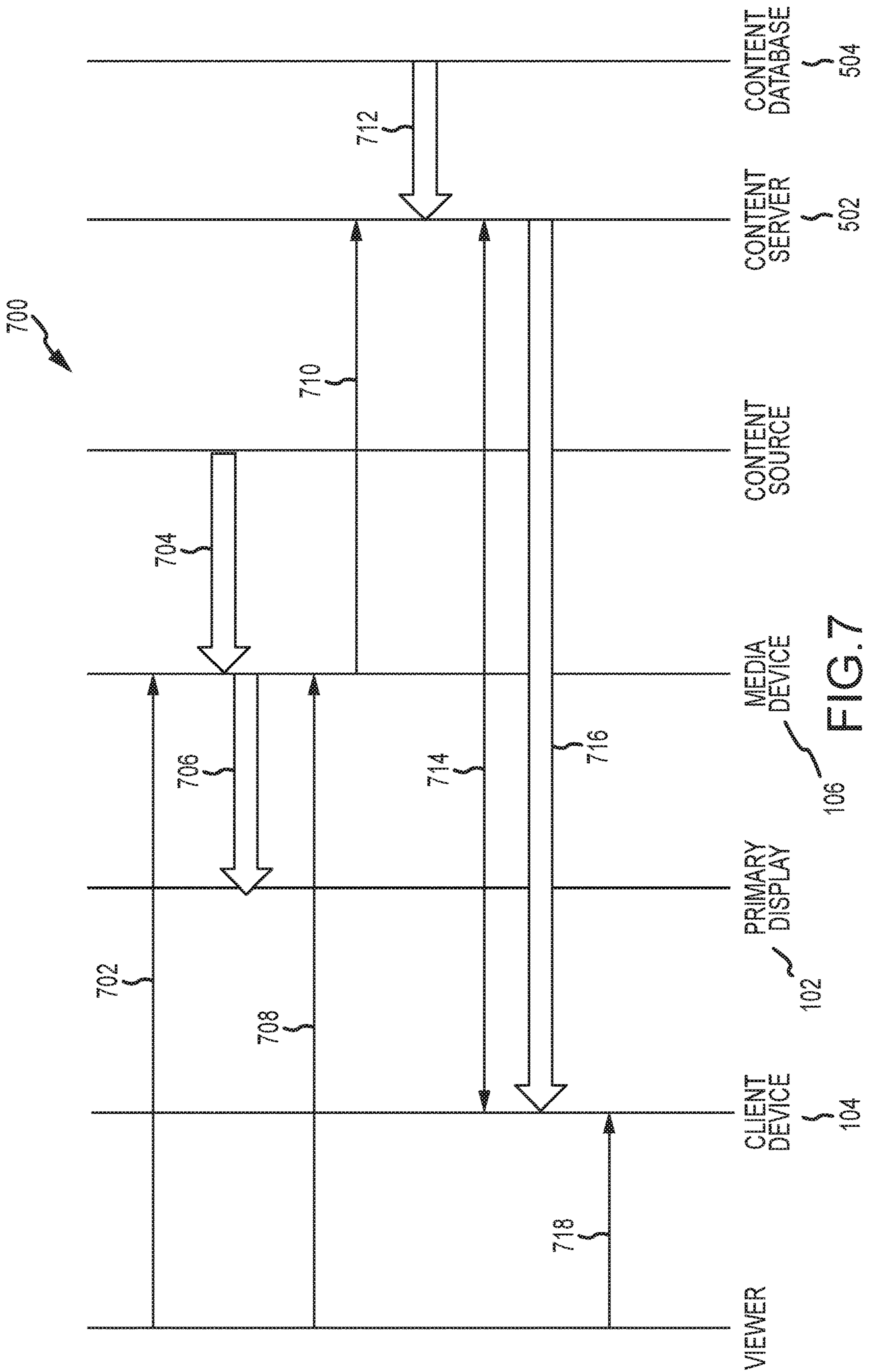


FIG.6



REAL-TIME PLACESHIFTING OF MEDIA CONTENT TO PAIRED DEVICES

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/299,691, filed Oct. 21, 2016, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/909,895, filed Jun. 4, 2013, now issued U.S. Pat. No. 9,497,231.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The following description generally relates to providing media content to a secondary display device during a placeshifting session initiated while media content is presented on a primary display device.

BACKGROUND

Media content can now be received from any number of different sources. Broadcast television content, for example, can typically be received at set-top box (STB) or other receiver that receives a direct broadcast satellite (DBS), cable and/or terrestrial broadcast signal, and such received content may also be stored in a personal or digital video recorder (DVR) or the like for viewing at a later time (“time shifting”). Live or recorded content can also be “placeshifted” to allow viewing at remote locations away from the viewer’s primary television set. Due to the proliferation of portable consumer electronic devices with display and network communication capabilities, viewers have more opportunities to placeshift content. Additionally, consumer expectations are likely to increase over time based on their perception of the current state of technological advances. Accordingly, it is now desirable to create systems and methods for placeshifting media content in an expeditious manner with reduced manual interaction to provide a more satisfactory user experience. Other desirable features and characteristics may also become apparent from the subsequent detailed description and the appended claims, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and this background section.

BRIEF SUMMARY

According to various exemplary embodiments, systems, devices and methods are provided for placeshifting a media program available for presentation on a primary display device in a first format via a media device coupled to the primary display device. One exemplary method involves the media device storing identification information for a client device coupled to a network, receiving a request to transfer the media program, and in response to the request, establishing a peer-to-peer communication session with the client device over the network using the identification information and transferring an encoded content stream corresponding to the media program that has a format different from the first format to the client device via the peer-to-peer communication session.

In other embodiments, an apparatus for a media device is provided. The media device includes a first interface configured to provide a first content stream that corresponds to a media program and has a first format to a primary display device, a network interface configured to communicate via a network, a data storage element configured to maintain identification information for a client device communi-

tively coupled to the network, and an input element configured to receive a placeshifting request. The media device also includes a control module coupled to the data storage element, the input element, and the network interface, wherein in response to the placeshifting request, the control module is configured to establish a peer-to-peer communication session with the client device over the network using the identification information and transfer a second content stream that corresponds to the media program and has a second format different from the first format to the client device via the peer-to-peer communication session.

In another embodiment, a method of placeshifting a media program involves associating a client device with a media device coupled to a primary display device, providing the media program to the primary display device via the media device, detecting, by the media device, a placeshifting request gesture while providing the media program to the primary display device, and in response to the placeshifting request gesture, establishing a peer-to-peer communication session with the client device over a network based on the association with the media device and providing the media program to the client device over the network via the peer-to-peer communication session.

Various embodiments, aspects and other features are described in more detail below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

Exemplary embodiments will hereinafter be described in conjunction with the following drawing figures, wherein like numerals denote like elements, and

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a media system in accordance with one or more embodiments;

FIG. 2 is a flowchart of an exemplary placeshifting process suitable for use with the media system of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a flowchart of an exemplary pairing process suitable for use with the media system of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a diagram illustrating a sequence of communications within the media system of FIG. 1 in accordance with one exemplary embodiment of the placeshifting process of FIG. 2;

FIG. 5 is a block diagram of a media system in accordance with one or more embodiments;

FIG. 6 is a flowchart of an exemplary server placeshifting process suitable for use with the media system of FIG. 5; and

FIG. 7 is a diagram illustrating a sequence of communications within the media system of FIG. 5 in accordance with one exemplary embodiment of the server placeshifting process of FIG. 6.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The following detailed description of the invention is merely exemplary in nature and is not intended to limit the invention or the application and uses of the invention. Furthermore, there is no intention to be bound by any theory presented in the preceding background or the following detailed description.

Embodiments of the subject matter described herein generally relate to placeshifting media content available for presentation on a primary display device, such as a television, to a secondary display device, such as a portable electronic device, substantially in real-time and on-demand with reduced manual overhead and delay. As used herein, “media content,” “media program,” or variants thereof should be understood as referring to any audio, video,

audio/visual or other programming in any streaming, file-based or other format. As described in greater detail below, a media device associated with the primary display device establishes an association (or pairing) with the secondary display device. In response to receiving a placeshifting request, the media device utilizes the association to establish a peer-to-peer communication session with the paired secondary display device. Thereafter, the media device initiates a transfer of the media content currently being presented (or otherwise selected for presentation) on the primary display device to the secondary display device via the peer-to-peer communication session in an automated manner. In other words, the peer-to-peer communication session is established and the placeshifting session via the peer-to-peer communication session is initiated without requiring additional manual interaction beyond the manual interaction to provide the placeshifting request. In one or more embodiments, the media device includes a sensing arrangement capable of detecting gestures by a person in the vicinity of the media device (e.g., a viewer of the primary display device), wherein the media device identifies the placeshifting request in response to recognizing a gesture detected by the sensing arrangement as matching a designated placeshifting request gesture. Thus, a viewer of the primary display device may initiate placeshifting to a secondary display device by simply making a gesture without having to manipulate a user input interface of the media device (e.g., a remote control or the like) and/or a user input interface of the secondary display device (e.g., a keypad or the like) to facilitate the placeshifting.

As described in greater detail below in the context of FIGS. 1-4, in accordance with one or more embodiments, the media device scans or otherwise accesses a local network to detect the presence of the secondary display device in the vicinity of the media device and/or primary display device. In response to discovering the secondary display device, the media device obtains, from the secondary display device, unique identification information for the secondary display device on the local network and stores that identification information to maintain an association with the secondary display device. Thereafter, the media device provides a media program to the primary display device for presentation to a viewer. In response to receiving a placeshifting request from a viewer of the primary display device, the media device identifies the secondary display device as the desired destination for the media program and utilizes the identification information to automatically establish a peer-to-peer communication session via the local network with a placeshifting application on the secondary display device. Thereafter, the media device initiates a placeshifting session with the placeshifting application and automatically transfers or otherwise transmits, via the peer-to-peer communication session, a content stream corresponding to the media program being provided to the primary display device. In this regard, in response to receiving the placeshifting request, the media device may encode the media program substantially in real-time or on-the-fly in an appropriate format for communication over the network and subsequent presentation by the secondary display device. Accordingly, the encoded content stream transmitted by the media device has a different encoding format than the content stream provided to the primary display device.

In other embodiments, as described in greater detail below in the context of FIGS. 5-7, in response to receiving a placeshifting request from a viewer of the primary display device, the media device identifies the secondary display device as the desired destination for the media program and

automatically transmits or otherwise provides stored identification information for the secondary display device to a content server along with an indication of the media program being provided to the primary display device at the time the placeshifting request was received. Thereafter, the content server utilizes the received identification information to automatically establish a peer-to-peer communication session with a placeshifting application on the secondary display device via a network. The content server then initiates a placeshifting session with the placeshifting application and automatically transfers or otherwise transmits a content stream corresponding to the media program presented on the primary display device. Again, the content stream provided by the content server to the secondary display device is encoded using an appropriate encoding format for communication over the network and subsequent presentation by the secondary display device, which may be different from the encoding format of the content stream provided to the primary display device.

FIG. 1 depicts a media system 100 configured to support transferring or otherwise placeshifting a media program (or media content) available for presentation on a primary display device 102, such as a television, to a secondary display device 104 that has been previously paired with a media device 106 associated with the primary display device 102. The secondary display device 104 may be realized as any sort of electronic device capable of playing or otherwise presenting media content, such as a mobile telephone, a laptop or notebook computer, a tablet computer, a desktop computer, a personal digital assistant, a video game player, a portable media player and/or any other media playback device capable of rendering media content received via a network 108. For convenience, but without limitation, the secondary display device 104 may alternatively be referred to herein as a client device.

As described in greater detail below, the media device 106 communicates with the client device 104 via the network 108 and stores or otherwise maintains information identifying the client device 104 to establish a pairing (or association) with the client device 104. Thereafter, in response to receiving a request to transfer or placeshift a media program available for presentation on the primary display device 102 to the client device 104, the media device 106 utilizes the stored identification information for the client device 104 to automatically establish a peer-to-peer communication session 109 with the client device 104 via the network 108 and automatically transfer the media program to the client device 104 via the peer-to-peer communication session 109. In exemplary embodiments, the media device 106 provides or otherwise furnishes the media program to the primary display device 102 as a media content stream having a format that is capable of being decoded and/or presented by the primary display device 102. In response to the receiving the placeshifting request, the media device 106 automatically encodes (or transcodes) the media program into a different format suitable for transmission via the network 108 and subsequent decoding and/or presentation by the client device 104 and transfers the media program to the client device 104 by providing the encoded stream directly to the client device 104 via the peer-to-peer communication session 109. For example, when the primary display device 102 is realized as a digital television, the media device 106 may provide the media program to the primary display device 102 in an uncompressed video format (e.g., an uncompressed encoding format in accordance with the high-definition multimedia interface (HDMI) specification), and in response to the placeshifting request, encode the media program to the

H.264 encoding format (e.g., MPEG-4 Part 10 or Advanced Video Coding) before transferring the media program to the client device **104**.

In exemplary embodiments, the client device **104** includes or otherwise executes a media placeshifting application (or process) **110** configured to support establishing the peer-to-peer communication session **109** with the media device **106** via the network **108** and receiving the encoded media content stream from the media device **106** via the peer-to-peer communication session **109**. The placeshifting application **110** is configured to allow the peer-to-peer communication session **109** to be automatically established with the media device **106** without any manual interaction, which, in turn, allows the media device **106** to automatically transfer the media program to the client device **104** via the network **108** without any additional manual interaction after the placeshifting request is received by the media device **106**. Thereafter, the placeshifting application **110** may decode the received media content stream and present the media program on the display **112** associated with the client device **104**, or alternatively, store the media program on the client device **104** for subsequent presentation on the display **112**.

As illustrated in FIG. 1, the client device **104** includes a processing system **116** that is coupled to the display **112** and a networking interface **118**, wherein the processing system **116** is configured to execute or otherwise support the placeshifting application **110** and additional processes, tasks, functions, and/or operations described in greater detail below. The processing system **116** may be realized using any suitable processing system and/or devices, such as, for example, one or more processors, central processing units (CPUs), graphics processing units (GPUs), controllers, microprocessors, microcontrollers, processing cores and/or other computing resources configured to support the subject matter described herein. In exemplary embodiments, the client device **104** includes a data storage element (or memory) **120** that is coupled to or otherwise accessed by the processing system **116**. The memory **120** may be realized using as random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), flash memory, magnetic or optical mass storage, or any other suitable configuration of non-transitory short or long term data storage or other non-transitory computer-readable media capable of storing programming instructions for execution by the processing system **116**. The stored programming instructions, when read and executed by the processing system **116**, cause processing system **116** to create, generate, or otherwise facilitate the placeshifting application **110** that supports the placeshifting process **200** described in greater detail below in the context of FIG. 2.

The display **112** generally represents the component, hardware or the like of the client device **104** that is capable of displaying, rendering, or otherwise presenting media content and/or other imagery that is received by or otherwise stored on the client device **104**. In this regard, the display **112** may be realized as a monitor, screen, or another conventional electronic display device capable of graphically presenting media content and/or other imagery.

The networking interface **118** generally represents the component, hardware or the like of the client device **104** that facilitates communications with the network **108**. In this regard, the network **108** may be realized as any communications network capable of supporting transmission of data and/or information via a peer-to-peer communication session **109** between devices **104**, **106**. For example, in one embodiment, the network **108** may be realized as a wireless local area network (WLAN) (e.g., in accordance with one or more of the IEEE 802.11 standards) that supports the trans-

mission control protocol and/or internet protocol (TCP/IP) or other conventional protocols, in which case the networking interface **118** is realized as a wireless adapter, a wireless transceiver, a wireless network interface controller, or the like. In another embodiment, the network **108** is realized as a wireless personal area network (PAN) or another suitable short range network, such as, for example, a Bluetooth ad-hoc network, in which case the networking interface **118** is realized as a Bluetooth adapter (or transceiver). In yet other embodiments, the network **108** may be realized as a cellular communications network, a wired local area network, the Internet, or the like, in which case, the networking interface **118** may be realized as a cellular transceiver, a wired network interface controller (e.g., an Ethernet adapter), or the like. That said, in exemplary embodiments described herein in the context of FIGS. 1-4, the network **108** is realized as a local network that supports communications between the media device **106** and other secondary display devices within a vicinity of the media device **106** and/or the primary display device **102**, such as a WLAN or a Bluetooth PAN, wherein the networking interface **118** is appropriately realized as a wireless network adapter or a Bluetooth adapter.

Still referring to FIG. 1, in the illustrated embodiment, the media device **106** is any component, hardware or the like capable of receiving and processing media content and providing media content to the primary display device **102** for presentation on the primary display device **102**. As described above, the primary display device **102** generally represents a television, monitor, liquid crystal display (LCD), light emitting diode (LED) display, plasma display, or the like that graphically presents, renders, or otherwise displays imagery and/or video corresponding to media content provided by the media device **106**. In some embodiments, media device **106** is a set-top box (STB) or similar system that is able to receive television programming and/or to record certain media programs. Exemplary embodiments of media device **106** will therefore include a receiver interface **132** for receiving satellite, cable and/or broadcast programming signals from broadcast content sources **122**, as well as a data storage medium **134** (e.g., a hard disk, flash memory, or another suitable non-volatile data storage element) to support a digital video recorder (DVR) feature and/or functionality, a display interface **136** for providing imagery and/or video corresponding to a media program to the primary display device **102**, one or more input elements (e.g., an input/output interface **144** to a remote control or other user input device **148**) for receiving user inputs to media device **106**, and a control module **130** that directs, manages, or otherwise controls the operations of the media device **106** as appropriate. For convenience, but without limitation, the data storage medium **134** is alternatively referred to herein as a DVR. In some embodiments, the media device **106** may also include an access card interface or card reader **138** adapted to receive an access card **139** (or viewing card) configured to ensure that the viewer is authorized to view media content provided to the primary display device **102**. In this regard, the access card **139** may include unique identification information associated with a particular subscriber to the broadcast content source **122** or otherwise include information that facilitates receiving and/or decoding media content provided by the broadcast content source **122**.

The network interface **140** generally represents the component, hardware or the like of the media device **106** that facilitates communications with the client device **104** via the network **108**. Accordingly, depending on the embodiment,

the network interface **140** may be realized as a wireless adapter, a wireless transceiver, a wireless network interface controller, a Bluetooth adapter (or transceiver), a cellular transceiver, a wired network interface controller (e.g., an Ethernet adapter), or the like as appropriate. That said, in exemplary embodiments described herein in the context of FIGS. 1-4, the network interface **140** is realized as a wireless network adapter or a Bluetooth adapter that facilitates communications via a local network with secondary display devices within a vicinity of the media device **106** and/or the primary display device **102**. It should be noted that in some embodiments, the frequencies utilized by the networking interface **140** are different from the frequencies utilized by the I/O interface **144**. In this regard, the networking interface **140** may operate on an unlicensed radio band (e.g., 2.4 GHz carrier frequency) while the I/O interface **144** operates at a lower frequency, such as, for example, consumer infrared (e.g., carrier frequency in the range of about 30 kHz to about 60 kHz).

In exemplary embodiments, input elements to the media device **106** also include a sensing arrangement **142** that is capable of sensing, measuring, or otherwise detecting an environmental condition proximate to or otherwise in the vicinity of the media device **106** and/or the primary display device **102**. For example, in one embodiment, the sensing arrangement **142** is realized as a motion sensing arrangement (or motion sensor) that is configured to sense, measure, or otherwise detect physical motions or gestures **150** by the viewer of the primary display device **102** or other users in the vicinity of the media device **106** and/or the primary display device **102**. The control module **130** is coupled to the sensing arrangement **142** to receive the output indicative of the environmental condition sensed, measured, detected, or otherwise quantified by the sensing arrangement **142**. As described in greater detail below, in accordance with one or more embodiments, the control module **130** analyzes or otherwise processes the output of the sensing arrangement **142** to determine or otherwise identify whether the detected environmental condition (e.g., a particular gesture **150** by a viewer of the primary display device **102**) is indicative of a desire to placeshift or otherwise transfer a media program that is concurrently being presented on the primary display device **102** at the time the placeshift request is identified or otherwise received.

It should be appreciated that FIG. 1 depicts merely one exemplary embodiment of a media device **106**, and in practice, the media device **106** may be physically and/or logically implemented in any manner to suit the needs of a particular embodiment. In this regard, in some embodiments, the components in media device **106** may be provided within a common chassis or housing as illustrated in FIG. 1, although equivalent embodiments may implement media device **106** with any number of inter-connected but discrete components or systems. For example, in some embodiments, the media device **106** may be realized as a combination of a STB and a placeshifting device, wherein some features of the media device **106** (e.g., the DVR **134**, the receiver **132**, the display interface **136**, I/O interface **144** and/or sensing arrangement **142**) are implemented by the STB and other features of the media device **106** (e.g., the network interface **140**) are implemented by the placeshifting device, wherein the placeshifting device works in conjunction with the STB to shift the viewing experience from a home television (e.g., primary display device **102**) to a viewing display **112** on the client device **104** (e.g., via placeshifting application **110**) that is accessed via network **108**. Examples of placeshifting devices that may be used in

some embodiments of media device **106** could include any of the various SLINGBOX products available from Sling Media of Foster City, Calif., although other products or services could be used in other embodiments. Many different types of placeshifting devices are generally capable of receiving media content from an external source, such as any sort of DVR or STB, cable or satellite programming source, DVD player, content servers, and/or the like. In other embodiments, placeshifting features are incorporated within the same device that provides content-receiving or other capabilities. Media device **106** may be a hybrid DVR and/or receiver, for example, that also provides transcoding and placeshifting features. Examples of conventional placeshifting functions, features, systems and structures are described in United States Patent Publication No. 2006/0095471, although the features described herein could be equivalently applied with any number of other techniques and structures in addition to those described in that particular publication.

Still referring to FIG. 1, in the illustrated embodiment, media device **106** is capable of receiving digital broadcast satellite (DBS) signals transmitted from a broadcast source **122**, such as a satellite, using an antenna **124** that provides received signals to the receiver **132**. Equivalent embodiments, however, could receive programming at receiver **132** from any sort of cable connection, broadcast source, removable media, network service, external device and/or the like. The DVR **134** feature stores recorded programming (e.g., broadcast programming received via receiver **132**) on a hard disk drive, memory, or other storage medium as appropriate in response to user/viewer programming instructions, wherein the recorded programming may be subsequently viewed on primary display device **102** or client device **104** via network **108**. Content stored in DVR **134** may be any sort of file-based programming or other content that is accessible to media device **106**. Additionally, media content in DVR **134** may be stored in any sort of compressed or uncompressed format, as desired, and may be encoded or transcoded as desired for effective receipt, storage, retrieval and playing.

Control module **130** may be realized as any suitable combination of hardware, firmware, and/or other components of the media device **106** capable of directing, managing or otherwise controlling the operations of media device **106** and supporting the placeshifting process **200** described in greater detail below in the context of FIG. 2. The control module **130** may include one or more processing systems and/or devices, such as, for example, one or more processors, central processing units (CPUs), graphics processing units (GPUs), controllers, microprocessors, microcontrollers, processing cores and/or other computing resources. The media device **106** includes a data storage element (or memory) **146** that is coupled to or otherwise accessed by the control module **130** and stores programming instructions that, when read and executed, cause the control module **130** to perform various tasks, functions, processes and/or operations to control operations of the media device **106** and support the placeshifting process **200** described in greater detail below. In some embodiments, the control module **130** is implemented as a "system on a chip" (SoC) that incorporates a hybrid microcontroller with memory, input/output and other features to perform the various signal processing and other actions of media device **106**, and in which case a separate memory **146** may not be provided.

FIG. 2 depicts an exemplary embodiment of a placeshifting process **200** suitable for implementation by media device in a media system, such as media device **106**, to placeshift media content from a primary display device to a secondary

display device substantially in real-time or on-demand. The various tasks performed in connection with the illustrated process 200 may be implemented using software, hardware, firmware, or any combination thereof. For illustrative purposes, the following description may refer to elements mentioned above in connection with FIG. 1. In practice, portions of the placeshifting process 200 may be performed by different elements of the media device 106, such as, for example, the control module 130, the receiver interface 132, the display interface 136, the network interface 140, the memory 146, the sensing arrangement 142 and/or the I/O interface 144. It should be appreciated that the placeshifting process 200 may include any number of additional or alternative tasks, the tasks need not be performed in the illustrated order and/or the tasks may be performed concurrently, and/or the placeshifting process 200 may be incorporated into a more comprehensive procedure or process having additional functionality not described in detail herein. Moreover, one or more of the tasks shown and described in the context of FIG. 2 could be omitted from a practical embodiment of the placeshifting process 200 as long as the intended overall functionality remains intact.

Referring to FIG. 2, and with continued reference to FIG. 1, in exemplary embodiments, the placeshifting process 200 begins by pairing or otherwise establishing an association between the media device and one or more secondary devices (task 202). As described in greater detail below in the context of FIG. 3, in exemplary embodiments, the media device 106 detects or otherwise identifies the presence of the client device 104 in the vicinity of the media device 106 via the network 108, for example, by performing a discovery procedure on the network 108 or otherwise scanning the network 108 for other devices. The media device 106 obtains identification information for the client device 104 on the network 108 from the client device 104 via the network 108, and stores or otherwise maintains the identification information for the client device 104 in memory 146. The identification information may include an address of the client device 104 on the network 108, a unique identifier associated with a hardware component of the client device 104 used to access the network 108 (e.g., a Bluetooth address, a media access control address, or the like), a unique identifier associated with the client device 104 (e.g., a mobile phone number, an international mobile station equipment identity number, a unique number assigned to the client device 104 by the media system 100, or the like), and/or model and/or versioning information for the client device 104 (e.g., the type of electronic device, make and/or model of electronic device, firmware version, and the like). The media device 106 may also obtain network authentication information from the client device 104, such as, for example, secure sockets layer (SSL) keys, cryptographic keys, or the like. In this manner, the client device 104 is paired or associated with the media device 106, wherein the media device 106 utilizes the stored identification information and/or authentication information for the paired client device 104 to automatically and securely placeshift media content from the primary display device 102 to the client device 104, as described in greater detail below. In a similar manner, any other secondary display devices in the vicinity of the media device 106 may be paired with the media device 106 to support placeshifting media content from the primary display device 102 to different secondary display devices.

After the media device has been paired with one or more secondary display devices, in exemplary embodiments, the placeshifting process 200 continues by identifying media

content selected for viewing on the primary display device and providing the selected media content to the primary display device in a first encoding format (tasks 204, 206). For example, a viewer of the primary display device 102 may manipulate a remote control or other user input device 148 associated with the media device 106 to access a program guide feature provided by the media device 106 and select or otherwise identify a broadcast media program available from the broadcast source 122 for viewing on the primary display device 102. In response, the media device 106 obtains the broadcast stream corresponding to the selected media program from the broadcast source 122 via the receiver 132 and provides that broadcast stream to the primary display device 102 (e.g., via the display interface 136) in the appropriate encoding format. For example, the media device 106 may receive a broadcast stream from the broadcast source 122 in the MPEG-2 encoding format and convert the broadcast stream from the MPEG-2 encoding format to an uncompressed video encoding format (e.g., HDMI) that is provided to the primary display device 102. In response to receiving the broadcast stream, the primary display device 102 renders or otherwise displays the imagery and/or video of the selected broadcast media program. In some embodiments, before providing the selected broadcast media program to the primary display device 102, the media device 106 and/or control module 130 accesses the access card 139 to obtain the subscriber account information associated with the media device 106 and verifies or otherwise confirms the subscriber account information allows the selected broadcast media program to be viewed on the primary display device 102 before providing the selected broadcast media program stream to the primary display device 102. Alternatively, a viewer of the primary display device 102 may manipulate the remote control or other user input device 148 associated with the media device 106 to access the DVR feature provided by the media device 106 and select or otherwise identify a stored (or recorded) media program in the DVR 134 for viewing on the primary display device 102. In response, the media device 106 obtains the stored stream corresponding to the selected media program from the DVR 134 and provides that stored content stream to the primary display device 102. In some embodiments, the media device 106 stores media programs in the DVR 134 in the same uncompressed video encoding format as is provided to the primary display device 102.

In exemplary embodiments, the placeshifting process 200 continues by receiving an indication or request to placeshift or otherwise transfer the media content on the primary display device to a secondary device (task 208). In accordance with one or more embodiments, the control module 130 monitors the sensing arrangement 142 for an environmental condition indicative of a desire to placeshift media content. For example, the sensing arrangement 142 may be realized as a motion sensor with a particular gesture or another quantifiable motion pattern detectable by the sensing arrangement 142 being designated or otherwise predefined as indicating a desire to placeshift content (e.g., the designated placeshifting request gesture). The control module 130 may monitor the output of the sensing arrangement 142 to recognize, detect, or otherwise identify when the output of the sensing arrangement 142 indicates a gesture 150 by the viewer that matches the designated placeshifting request gesture. In alternative embodiments, the control module 130 may receive the indication or request to placeshift media content via the user input device 148, for example, in response to the viewer of the primary display device 102 manipulating the user input device 148 to access a menu or

other GUI element presented by the media device **106** on the primary display device **102** to indicate the placeshifting request or otherwise select button or other input element of the user input device **148** to indicate the placeshifting request.

In accordance with one or more embodiments, the designated placeshifting request gesture may be configured or otherwise established by the viewer. For example, the viewer may manipulate the user input device **148** to initiate a gesture definition routine performed by the media device **106**, and in response, the media device **106** may present or otherwise provide a graphical user interface (GUI) display on the primary display device **102** instructing the viewer to make the desired gesture that the viewer would like to designate as the placeshifting request gesture. Thereafter, the viewer may perform the desired gesture, wherein the control module **130** captures the output of the sensing arrangement **142** and generates or otherwise creates a signature for the gesture based on the output of the sensing arrangement **142**. In this regard, the signature for the gesture represents the characteristics or pattern of the output generated by the sensing arrangement **142** in response to the gesture. The control module **130** stores or otherwise maintains the signature for the designated placeshifting request gesture in memory **146**, wherein to detect or otherwise identify a placeshifting request, the control module **130** compares the output of the sensing arrangement **142** to the designated placeshifting request gesture signature in memory **146** and recognizes, detects, or otherwise identifies a placeshifting request when the output of the sensing arrangement **142** matches or is otherwise substantially equal to the stored gesture signature.

Still referring to FIG. 2, in response to receiving indication of a desire to placeshift the media program selected for viewing on the primary display device, in exemplary embodiments, the placeshifting process **200** continues by capturing or otherwise obtaining information or metadata that describes the current display status of the media program on the primary display device at or near the instant in time when the placeshifting request was received or otherwise detected (task **210**). For example, the control module **130** may capture or otherwise obtain status information describing the state of the media program on the primary display device **102**, such as, for example, a timestamp or other indicator of the portion of (or location within) the media program content stream that is currently being displayed and/or rendered on the primary display device **102** at the time the placeshifting request is received and an indication of the playback state of the media program (e.g., whether the media program was paused or playing). As described in greater detail below, in exemplary embodiments, the captured metadata or information describing the displayed state of the media program on the primary display device **102** is provided to the secondary device for correlating presentation of the placeshifted instance of the media program on the client device **104** with the instance of the media program presented on the primary display device **102**.

In exemplary embodiments, the placeshifting process **200** continues by identifying or otherwise determining a destination device for placeshifting the media content from among the secondary devices paired with the media device (task **212**). For example, the media device **106** may be paired with a plurality of different secondary display devices, wherein to determine the destination device, the media device **106** may access the network **108** to detect or otherwise identify which paired secondary devices are currently in the vicinity of the media device **106** and available for

placeshifting. For example, the media device **106** may enable the network interface **140** in response to the placeshifting request and scan the network **108** for any devices connected to the network **108** that are broadcasting identification information that matches stored identification information in memory **146** that is associated with a paired secondary display device. If the media device **106** identifies the client device **104** as the only paired secondary display device connected to the network **108**, the media device **106** automatically identifies the client device **104** as the destination device. In other embodiments, when multiple paired secondary devices are detected on the network **108** and identified by the media device **106** as being available for placeshifting, the media device **106** may identify the client device **104** as the destination device in response to receiving an indication from the viewer.

In accordance with one or more embodiments, the media device **106** presents a GUI display on the primary display device **102** that lists or otherwise indicates the paired secondary devices identified by the media device **106** as being available for placeshifting, wherein the viewer manipulates the user input device **148** or performs an additional gesture **150** to select or otherwise indicate the client device **104** as the desired destination device from among the plurality of paired secondary devices. For example, the media device **106** may present a GUI display on the primary display device **102** that includes graphical representations of the available paired secondary devices arranged with a particular orientation with respect to one another, wherein the media device **106** identifies the client device **104** in response to detecting a gesture **150** via the sensing arrangement **142** that is in a direction that corresponds to the direction or orientation of the graphical representation of client device **104** on the primary display device **102** with respect to the graphical representations of the remaining available paired secondary devices on the primary display device **102**.

After identifying the desired destination device, the placeshifting process **200** continues by automatically establishing a peer-to-peer communication session with the destination device using the stored identification information for the destination device (task **214**). In this regard, the media device **106** automatically establishes the peer-to-peer communication session **109** without requiring any further manual interaction with the media device **106**. For example, if the network **108** is a WLAN, the media device **106** may establish the peer-to-peer communication session **109** with the placeshifting application **110** on the client device **104** by creating a connection request using the stored identification information and/or authentication information for the client device **104** and transmitting or otherwise broadcasting the connection request on the network **108**. Alternatively, if the network **108** is a Bluetooth PAN, the media device **106** may establish the peer-to-peer communication session **109** with the placeshifting application **110** on the client device **104** by enabling or otherwise powering the network interface **140** to transition the network interface **140** out of a lower power mode (e.g., an idle mode, a sleep mode, or the like) and establish the ad-hoc Bluetooth network **108**. Thereafter, the media device **106** creates a connection request for the client device **104** using the stored identification information and transmits the connection request to the client device **104**, which, in turn, may transition the Bluetooth transceiver or other network interface of the client device **104** from a low power mode to an active mode. In this regard, prior to the placeshifting request, the media device **106** need not be coupled to the network **108**, and the network **108** between

the media device **106** and the client device **104** may not even exist (e.g., in the case of an ad-hoc network). It should be noted that the subject matter described herein is not intended to be limited to any particular peer-to-peer communications protocol and/or any particular type of local network, and the examples described herein merely represent one potential implementation.

In exemplary embodiments, the placeshifting process **200** continues by encoding the media content selected for presentation on the primary display device into a different encoding format than the media content stream provided to the primary display device (task **216**). For example, the media device **106** may obtain the media program stream for the selected media program currently being presented on the primary display device **102** and encode (or transcode) the media program stream into a different format suitable for communication via the network **108** and presentation on the client device **104**. In this regard, the media device **106** encodes the media program provided to the primary display device **102** on-the-fly or on-demand and substantially in real-time in response to the placeshifting request. In one embodiment, when the media program being presented on the primary display device **102** is a broadcast media program, the control module **130** obtains the broadcast content stream for the media program from the receiver **132** and converts or transcodes the broadcast content stream for the selected media program to an encoded content stream with a format more suitable for communications over the network **108** and/or presentation on the client device **104**. For example, the control module **130** may convert or otherwise transcode a broadcast stream received from the broadcast source **122** from the MPEG-2 encoding format to the H.264 encoding format. Alternatively, the control module **130** may convert or otherwise transcode the content stream being provided to the primary display device **102** from the uncompressed video encoding format to the H.264 encoding format. In some embodiments, the control module **130** may utilize stored identification information for the client device **104** to identify the new encoding format and/or file format that should be utilized for placeshifting the media program to that client device **104**. For example, if the identification information for the client device **104** indicates the client device **104** is a particular type of device, a particular make and/or model, and/or a particular firmware version, the control module **130** may identify the desired encoding format and/or file format for that particular device configuration from among a plurality of possible encoding formats supported by the control module **130** and encode the media program in that identified format.

In some embodiments, encoding the selected media program into a different encoding format also includes the control module **130** packetizing or otherwise encapsulating the selected media program for communications via the network **108**. For example, if the network **108** is a WLAN, the control module **130** may obtain the broadcast content stream for the selected media program from the receiver **132** and convert the broadcast content stream for the selected media program to an encoded content stream comprising a sequence of media content encapsulated in packets that are formatted in accordance with IEEE 802.11 specification. Similarly, if the network **108** is a PAN, the control module **130** may convert the content stream for the selected media program to an encoded content stream comprising a sequence of media content encapsulated in packets that are formatted in accordance with IEEE 802.15 specification.

After the selected media program is encoded with the proper format, the placeshifting process **200** continues by

transferring or otherwise providing the encoded media content directly to the destination device via the peer-to-peer communication session and transferring or otherwise providing the metadata describing the status of the media program on the primary display device to the destination device for correlating presentation of the placeshifted media program with the media program on the primary display device (tasks **218**, **220**). In this regard, the media device **106** initiates a placeshifting session with the client device **104** and automatically transmits the encoded content stream corresponding to the media program presented on the primary display device **102** directly to the placeshifting application **110** on the client device **104** over the network **108** via the peer-to-peer communication session **109**.

In accordance with one or more embodiments, in response to receiving the encoded content stream from the media device **106** via the peer-to-peer communication session **109**, the placeshifting application **110** displays, on the display **112** of the client device **104**, a GUI display including one or more GUI elements that may be manipulated by the user of the client device **104** to either initiate playback of the placeshifted media program on the client device **104** or store the placeshifted media program for subsequent viewing. In this regard, if the user of the client device **104** manipulates or otherwise selects a GUI element to begin playback of the media program on the display **112**, the placeshifting application **110** utilizes the metadata describing the display status of the media program on the primary display device **102** to correlate the playback on the display **112**. For example, if the display status metadata indicates that the media program on the primary display device **102** is paused at a particular location (or timestamp) within the media program at the time of the placeshifting request, the placeshifting application **110** may analyze or otherwise process the encoded stream such that the placeshifted media program is initially presented on the display **112** at (or as close as possible to) the same location (or timestamp) within the media program with playback in the paused state.

In other embodiments, if the display status metadata indicates that the media program on the primary display device **102** was not paused at the time of the placeshifting request, the placeshifting application **110** may analyze or otherwise process the encoded stream such that the placeshifted media program is initially presented on the display **112** at (or as close as possible to) a location (or timestamp) within the media program corresponding to the current time identified by the placeshifting application **110** and/or client device **104** with playback in the playing state. In this manner, the media program presented on the primary display device **102** may be effectively streamed directly to the client device **104** over the network **108** via the peer-to-peer communication session **109** and synchronized as close as possible to the concurrent presentation of the media program on the primary display device **102**. In other embodiments, the presentation of the media program on the primary display device **102** may cease in response to the placeshifting request, in which case the placeshifted media program may be initially presented on the display **112** at (or as close as possible to) a location (or timestamp) within the media program corresponding to the time of the placeshifting request with playback in the playing state, such that the media program presented on the primary display device **102** is effectively transferred from the primary display device **102** to the client device **104**.

In exemplary embodiments, after the user of the client device **104** has initiated playback or streaming of the placeshifted media program on the display **112**, the media device

106 continues encoding and transmitting the remainder of the media program to the client device 104 via the peer-to-peer communication session 109. The placeshifting application 110 may continue by buffering the received encoded stream for the placeshifted media program and/or presenting the placeshifted media program on the display 112 until the user manipulates the placeshifting application 110 to terminate playback. In this regard, when the user manipulates the placeshifting application 110 to terminate playback, the placeshifting application 110 may notify the media device 106 to stop encoding and transmitting the media program before terminating the peer-to-peer communication session 109.

In alternative embodiments, if the user of the client device 104 manipulates or otherwise selects a GUI element to postpone playback of the media program, the placeshifting application 110 stores, buffers, or otherwise maintains the media program with the second encoding format in the memory 120. In this regard, the user of the client device 104 may subsequently manipulate the placeshifting application 110 to select or otherwise initiate playback of the placeshifted media program stored in memory 120. The placeshifting application 110 may also store or otherwise maintain, in memory 120 in association with the placeshifted media program, the received metadata describing the status of that media program on the primary display device 102 at the time of the placeshifting request to correlate the subsequent playback on the display 112. For example, if the metadata indicates that the media program on the primary display device 102 was at a particular location (or timestamp) within the media program at the time of the placeshifting request, the placeshifting application 110 may utilize the display status metadata to analyze or otherwise process the stored media program such that the placeshifted media program is initially presented on the display 112 at (or as close as possible to) the same location (or timestamp) within the media program that was displayed on the primary display device 102 at the time of the placeshifting request. In this regard, in some embodiments, after the user of the client device 104 has manipulated the placeshifting application 110 to store the placeshifted media program, the placeshifting application 110 may notify the media device 106 to encode and transmit portions of the media program that preceded placeshifting request and are stored in or otherwise buffered by the DVR 134, the memory 146 and/or the control module 130.

Still referring to FIG. 2, it should be noted that in some embodiments, the placeshifting process 200 may verify or otherwise determine that the subscriber account information associated with the media device allows for placeshifting of the media content presented on the primary display device to secondary devices. For example, in response to a placeshifting request, the media device 106 and/or control module 130 may check the access card 139 to verify or otherwise confirm the subscriber account information associated with the primary display device 102 allows the selected broadcast media program to be viewed on a secondary device before providing the selected broadcast media program stream to the client device 104. Additionally, the media device 106 and/or control module 130 may verify or otherwise confirm that placeshifting of the selected media program is authorized by its associated content provider prior to placeshifting the selected media program. Furthermore, it should be noted that in some embodiments, once media content is placeshifted to the client device 104, the primary display device 102 may be utilized to present other media content. For example, while a broadcast media program is being

streamed to the client device 104 from the media device 106, another viewer of the primary display device 102 may manipulate the user input device 148 to initiate presentation of a stored media program on the DVR 134 on the primary display device 102.

FIG. 3 depicts an exemplary embodiment of a pairing process 300 suitable for implementation by media device in a media system, such as media device 106, in conjunction with the placeshifting process 200 of FIG. 2 to establish an association between a secondary display device and a media device that supports automatically placeshifting media content from the primary display device to the paired secondary device substantially in real-time or on-demand. The various tasks performed in connection with the illustrated process 300 may be implemented using software, hardware, firmware, or any combination thereof. For illustrative purposes, the following description may refer to elements mentioned above in connection with FIG. 1. In practice, portions of the pairing process 300 may be performed by different elements of the media device 106, such as, for example, the control module 130, the receiver interface 132, the display interface 136, the network interface 140, the memory 146, the sensing arrangement 142 and/or the I/O interface 144. It should be appreciated that the pairing process 300 may include any number of additional or alternative tasks, the tasks need not be performed in the illustrated order and/or the tasks may be performed concurrently, and/or the pairing process 300 may be incorporated into a more comprehensive procedure or process having additional functionality not described in detail herein. Moreover, one or more of the tasks shown and described in the context of FIG. 3 could be omitted from a practical embodiment of the pairing process 300 as long as the intended overall functionality remains intact.

Referring to FIG. 3, and with continued reference to FIGS. 1-2, in some embodiments, the pairing process 300 may be initialized by a viewer of the primary display device 102 manipulating the user input device 148 or otherwise making a gesture 150 to provide an indication to the media device 106 of a desire to pair a secondary display device with the media device 106. For example, the viewer may manipulate the user input device 148 to access a GUI menu feature provided by the media device 106 and manipulate or otherwise select a GUI element that initiates the pairing process 300. The pairing process 300 begins by discovering, detecting or otherwise identifying secondary devices proximate to or otherwise within the vicinity of the media device and presenting or otherwise displaying a GUI display that indicates the detected secondary devices (tasks 302, 304). For example, in response to the viewer indicating a desired to pair a secondary device with the media device 106, the control module 130 may enable or otherwise operate the network interface 140 to connect to the network 108 (e.g., in the case of WLAN) or establish the network 108 (e.g., in the case of an ad-hoc PAN such as a Bluetooth network). Thereafter, the media device 106 may scan the network 108 to discover, detect or otherwise identify secondary devices connected to the network 108, such as, client device 104. The media device 106 may obtain, for each detected device, unique identification information associated with that detected device that is broadcasted or otherwise made available by that respective detected device. Using the identification information, the media device 106 may generate or otherwise provide a GUI display on the primary display device 102 that includes a list, menu, or some other graphical representation of the detected devices within the vicinity of the media device 106.

In exemplary embodiments, the pairing process 300 continues by receiving an indication of the desired secondary device to be paired with the media device and storing or otherwise maintaining network identification information for that secondary device (tasks 306, 308). For example, a viewer of the primary display device 102 may manipulate the user input device 148 or otherwise making a gesture 150 to select the client device 104 from among the list of secondary devices detected by the media device 106 and thereby provide an indication to the media device 106 of a desire to pair the client device 104 with the media device 106. In response, the media device 106 stores or otherwise maintains, the unique identification information associated with client device 104 in memory 146 in association with an indication that the stored network identification information corresponds to a paired secondary device. Additionally, the media device 106 may utilize the identification information for the client device 104 to contact the placeshifting application 110 via the network 108 to obtain additional information for facilitating/establishing the peer-to-peer communication session 109, such as, for example, authentication information for communicating with the placeshifting application 110. After the pairing process 300 is completed, the media device 106 may utilize the stored identification information to detect or otherwise identify the client device 104 as a possible destination device (e.g., task 212) in conjunction with the placeshifting process 200, as described above.

FIG. 4 depicts an exemplary sequence 400 of communications within the media system 100 of FIG. 1 in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the placeshifting process 200 described above. As described above in the context of the pairing process 300 of FIG. 3, the sequence 400 begins with the media device 106 receiving 402 an indication of a desire to pair a secondary display device with the media device 106 in response to a viewer of the primary display device 102 manipulating the user input device 148 or making a particular gesture 150. In response to receiving the indication, the media device 106 communicates 404 with the client device 104 via the network 108 by scanning the network 108 to detect the presence of the client device 104 and obtain identification information for the client device 104 (e.g., task 302). Thereafter, the media device 106 presents or otherwise provides 406 a GUI display on the primary display device 102 that lists or otherwise indicates the client device 104 as being detected on the network 108 or otherwise in the vicinity of the media device 106 (e.g., task 304). Subsequently, the media device 106 receives 408 an indication of a desire to pair the client device 104 (e.g., task 306) in response to the viewer further manipulating the user input device 148 or making another gesture 150 to select the client device 104 indicated on the primary display device 102. Thereafter, the media device 106 stores or otherwise maintains the obtained identification information that is unique to the client device 104 in memory 146 to maintain the association with the client device 104.

After the client device 104 has been paired with the media device 106, the media device 106 may receive 410, from the viewer, a selection or indication of a particular media program available from the content source (e.g., broadcast source 122 or DVR 134) for presentation on the primary display device 102, wherein in response to identifying the selected media program (e.g., task 204), the media device 106 obtains 412 the content stream for the selected media program from the content source and provides 414 the content stream for the selected media program to the primary display device 102 in the uncompressed video encoding format (e.g., task 206). While the media program is

being presented on the primary display device 102, the media device 106 receives 416 an indication of a desire to placeshift the media program from the primary display device 102 to a paired secondary display device (e.g., task 208). For example, as described above, the sensing arrangement 142 may detect a gesture 150 by a viewer of the primary display device 102 that matches a predefined pattern of movement that is designated as representing a desire to placeshift the media program presented on the primary display device 102.

In response to receiving 416 a placeshifting request, the media device 106 identifies the client device 104 as the destination device (e.g., task 212) and automatically establishes 418 the peer-to-peer communication session 109 with the client device 104 using the unique identification information stored in memory 146 for the client device 104 (e.g., task 214), as described above. The media device 106 encodes the content stream obtained 412 from the content source into an encoding format suitable for transmission over the network 108 and subsequent display on the client device 104 (e.g., task 216) and automatically transfers or otherwise transmits 420 the encoded stream corresponding to the media program presented on the primary display device 102 to the client device 104 over the network 108 via the peer-to-peer communication session 109. Thereafter, a user of the client device 104 may interact 422 with the client device 104 (e.g., by manipulating GUI elements presented by the placeshifting application 110) to initiate playback or storage of the placeshifted media program by the client device 104 in a similar manner as described above. Additionally, as described above, the media device 106 may capture or otherwise obtain metadata describing the display status of the selected media program on the primary display device 102 when the placeshifting request is received 416 and provide that metadata to the client device 104 to correlate the subsequent playback of the placeshifted media program on the client device 104 with the presentation on the primary display device 102. For example, the display status metadata may be utilized to correlate the playback on the client device 104, such that the placeshifted media program is presented on the client device 104 concurrently and/or substantially in sync with the instance of the media program on the primary display device 102. Alternatively, playback of the placeshifted media program on the client device 104 may resume at the same location within the media program that was presented on the primary display device 102 when the media device 106 received 416 placeshifting request.

FIG. 5 depicts another embodiment of a media system 500 configured to support transferring or otherwise placeshifting a media program (or media content) available for presentation on a primary display device 102 via a media device 106 to a client device 104 that has been paired with the media device 106. Various components, features, functions, and/or other details of the elements of the media system 500 are similar to their counterpart elements described above in the context of the media system 100 of FIG. 1, and accordingly, such common components, features, functions, and/or other details will not be redundantly described in the context of FIG. 5.

In media system 500, rather than the media device 106 establishing a peer-to-peer communication session with the client device 104 via a network 508 (e.g., network 108), the media device 106 provides information identifying the destination device (e.g., client device 104) and the media program presented on the primary display device 102 to a content server 502 coupled to another network 506. The

content server **502** then utilizes the information received from the media device **106** to automatically establish a peer-to-peer communication session **509** with the client device **104** via network **506** and transfer or otherwise transmit an encoded stream of content corresponding to the identified media program to the client device **104** via the peer-to-peer communication session **509** with the client device **104** over network **506**. In this regard, the network **506** may be physically and/or logically distinct from the network **508** used by the media device **106** to establish the pairing with the client device **104**. For example, the network **508** may be realized as an ad-hoc network, a Bluetooth network, a PAN, or a WLAN or the like, while the network **506** is realized as the Internet, a cellular network, a broadband network, a wide area network, or the like.

The content server **502** may be implemented with any sort of server computer system or data processing system that is based upon any processor, architecture and/or operating system, and will typically include a processing system (or processing hardware), a data storage element (or memory), and various input/output features. Additionally, the content server **502** may be implemented using one or more dedicated or shared hardware servers, one or more virtual servers features as part of a “cloud computing” service, or any other suitable combination or cluster of servers. In exemplary embodiments, the content server **502** is coupled to the various content providers within the media system **500**, such as the broadcast source **122**, to obtain media content available for presentation on the primary display device **102**. In this regard, the content server **502** may include or otherwise be coupled to a database **504**, wherein the content server **502** copies, records, or otherwise stores instances of media programs available from the content sources within the media system **500**. For example, for a broadcast content source **122**, the content server **502** may record or otherwise copy individual content streams corresponding to the individual media programs broadcast on the various broadcast channels supported by the broadcast content source **122** into individual content files stored on the content database **504**. Depending on the embodiment, the content server **502** may store the content streams in content files having the same encoding format as that used by the broadcast source **122** to provide the media programs to the media device **106** (e.g., the broadcast encoding format), or alternatively, the content server **502** may convert or transcode content streams received from the broadcast source **122** into content files having a different encoding format other than the broadcast encoding format. In some embodiments, multiple instances of a particular media program may be stored in the content database **504** using different content files with each content file having a different encoding format.

FIG. **6** depicts an exemplary embodiment of a server placeshifting process **600** suitable for implementation by a server in a media system, such as content server **502**, to placeshift media content available for presentation on a primary display device to a secondary display device paired with a media device associated with the primary display device. The various tasks performed in connection with the illustrated process **600** may be implemented using software, hardware, firmware, or any combination thereof. For illustrative purposes, the following description may refer to elements mentioned above in connection with FIGS. **1-5**. In practice, portions of the server placeshifting process **600** may be performed by different elements of the media system **500**, such as, for example, the content server **502**, the content database **504**, the media device **106** and/or the client device **104**. It should be appreciated that the server placeshifting

process **600** may include any number of additional or alternative tasks, the tasks need not be performed in the illustrated order and/or the tasks may be performed concurrently, and/or the server placeshifting process **600** may be incorporated into a more comprehensive procedure or process having additional functionality not described in detail herein. Moreover, one or more of the tasks shown and described in the context of FIG. **6** could be omitted from a practical embodiment of the server placeshifting process **600** as long as the intended overall functionality remains intact.

Still referring to FIGS. **5-6**, in a similar manner as described above in the context of FIG. **1-4**, in exemplary embodiments, prior to execution of the server placeshifting process **600**, the media device **106** detects or otherwise identifies the client device **104** on the network **508** and establishes an association with the client device **104**, for example, by performing pairing process **300**. As described above, during the pairing process, the media device **106** obtains, from the client device **104** via network **508**, unique identification information associated with the client device **104** that may be utilized to locate the client device **104** on the network **506** along with any authentication information or other information that may be required to establish a peer-to-peer communication session **509** with the client device **104** via network **506**, and the media device **106** stores the obtained information (e.g., in memory **146**). Thereafter, during presentation of a media program on the primary display device **102**, the media device **106** identifies or otherwise receives a placeshifting request in a similar manner as described above, for example, by detecting a placeshifting request gesture **150**. In response to receiving the placeshifting request, the media device **106** obtains metadata describing the display status of the media program on the primary display device **102** and identifies the client device **104** as the desired destination device. Thereafter, the media device **106** obtains the stored identification information associated with the client device **104** from memory **146** and transmits or otherwise provides, to the content server **502** (e.g., via network **506**), the stored identification information and/or authentication information for the client device **104** along with information identifying the media program currently being presented on the primary display device **102** and the obtained display status metadata.

Referring to FIGS. **5-6**, the server placeshifting process **600** begins with the content server receiving, from the media device, identification information for the destination device along with identification information and display status metadata for the media program on the primary display device (tasks **602**, **604**, **606**). In exemplary embodiments, the server placeshifting process **600** continues with the content server determining or otherwise identifying the appropriate encoding format for the instance of the media program to be provided to the destination device (task **608**). In this regard, the content server **502** may determine the appropriate encoding format based on the identification information for the client device **104** and/or characteristics of the network **506**. For example, the content server **502** may determine a device type (e.g., mobile phone, tablet computer, desktop computer, or the like) of the client device **104** based on the identification information for the client device **104**, and thereby identify the appropriate content file type (or file extension) for subsequent display and/or rendering by that type of secondary display device. Additionally, the content server **502** may determine the appropriate encoding resolution (or quality) based on the device type and/or performance characteristics of the network **506** (e.g., the amount of bandwidth accessible and/or throughput achiev-

able over the network **506** between the content server **502** and the client device **104**). In some embodiments, the content server **502** may support adaptive bitrate streaming to the client device **104** using feedback from the client device **104** to increase and/or decrease the resolution.

In exemplary embodiments, the content server **502** accesses the content database **504** to obtain an instance of the identified media program in the identified encoding format. If the identified media program is not available in the desired encoding format, the content server **502** converts or otherwise transcodes an instance of the identified media program in the content database **504** to the desired encoding format. In the case of a live broadcast media program that may not be available in the content database **504**, the content server **502** may buffer the broadcast media program received from the broadcast content source **122** and convert the broadcast media program from the broadcast encoding format used by the broadcast content source **122** (e.g., MPEG-2) to the desired encoding format for placeshifting to the client device **104** (e.g., H.264) on-the-fly and substantially in real-time such that the broadcast media program is effectively being streamed to the client device **104** via the content server **502**.

After identifying the appropriate encoding format for placeshifting the identified media program to the destination device, the server placeshifting process **600** continues by automatically establishing a peer-to-peer communication session with the destination device and transferring, transmitting, or otherwise providing the identified media program to the destination device to the destination device via the peer-to-peer communication session in the identified encoding format (tasks **610**, **612**). In a similar manner as described above, the content server **502** utilizes the identification information for the client device **104** to locate the client device **104** on the network **506** and automatically establishes a peer-to-peer communication session **509** with the placeshifting application **110** on the client device **104** by using the identification information and/or authentication information to transmit a connection request to the client device **104** and/or authenticate the content server **502** with the placeshifting application **110**. Once the content server **502** obtains the identified media program in the desired encoding format, the content server **502** encapsulates or otherwise encodes the media program into an encoded content stream that is transmitted or otherwise transferred to the client device **104** via the peer-to-peer communication session **509**.

In one or more exemplary embodiments, the content server **502** provides the encoded media program to the client device **104** in accordance with the metadata describing the display status of the media program on the primary display device **102**. In this regard, the content server **502** may process the media content so that the encoded stream provided to the client device **104** begins or otherwise initializes at (or as close as possible to) the location (or timestamp) within the media program corresponding to when the placeshifting request was received by the media device **106**. For example, when encapsulating the media program into the encoded content stream, the content server **502** may obtain the content file for the media program from the content database **504** and truncate or otherwise disregard the portion of the content file corresponding to locations within the media program preceding when the placeshifting request was received, such that the encoded content stream begins at the location when the placeshifting request was received. In alternative embodiments, the content server **502** may merely provide the metadata describing the display status of the media program on the primary display device

102 to the placeshifting application **110**, which, in turn, utilizes the display status metadata to control playback of the placeshifted media program on the client device **104**.

FIG. 7 depicts an exemplary sequence **700** of communications within the media system **500** of FIG. 5 in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the server placeshifting process **600** after the client device **104** has been paired with the media device **106** via the network **508**. Again, after the client device **104** has been paired with the media device **106**, the media device **106** may receive **702**, from the viewer, a selection or indication of a particular media program available from a content source (e.g., broadcast source **122** or DVR **134**) for presentation on the primary display device **102**. After identifying the selected media program, the media device **106** obtains **704** a content stream for the selected media program from the content source and provides **706** the content stream for the selected media program to the primary display device **102** in the appropriate encoding format. Thereafter, while the media program is being presented on the primary display device **102**, the media device **106** receives **708** a placeshifting request from the viewer (e.g., by detecting a gesture **150** by the viewer that matches a designated placeshifting request gesture).

In response to receiving **708** the placeshifting request, the media device **106** identifies the client device **104** as the destination device, captures metadata describing the display status of the selected media program provided **706** to the primary display device **102**, and transmits or otherwise provides **710** the stored identification information for the client device **104** along with the display status metadata and an identification of the media program to be placeshifted to the content server **502** (e.g., via network **506**). Additionally, in some embodiments, the information provided **710** to the content server **502** may also include subscriber account information obtained by the media device **106** from the access card **139**. In this regard, before placeshifting content to the client device **104**, the content server **502** may confirm or otherwise verify that placeshifting the identified media program to the client device **104** is authorized or otherwise allowed based on the subscriber account information. For example, subscriber account information for the subscriber associated with the media device **106** may restrict what media programs may be placeshifted, wherein the content server **502** enforces those restrictions before providing content to the client device **104**. In this regard, the subscriber account information may allow media programs stored on the subscriber's DVR **134** to be placeshifted while restricting placeshifting of live broadcast media programs from the broadcast content source **122**, wherein the content server **502** analyzes the subscriber account information received from the media device **106** and prevents placeshifting to the client device **104** when the identified media program is currently being broadcast by the broadcast content source **122**. It should be noted that there are numerous possibilities for how subscriber account information can be used to regulate or otherwise restrict placeshifting, and the subject matter described herein is not intended to be limited to any particular implementation.

In the illustrated embodiment of FIG. 7, after the content server **502** receives **710** information from the media device **106** determines placeshifting the identified media program to the client device **104** is authorized for the subscriber (or customer) associated with the media device **106**, the content server **502** accesses the content database **504** to obtain **712** an instance of the identified media program. As described above in the context of FIG. 6, the content server **502** may identify the appropriate encoding format for the client

device **104** based on the identification information for the client device **104** and/or characteristics of the network **506** and select the instance of the identified media program in the content database **504** that is already encoded with that identified encoding format. In other embodiments, if the content database **504** does not maintain an instance of the identified media program in the desired encoding format, the content server **502** may convert an instance of the identified media program from the content database **504** into a content stream with the desired encoding format (e.g., by decoding then re-encoding into the desired encoding format).

As described above, the content server **502** utilizes the identification information for the client device **104** on the network **506** to automatically establish **714** the peer-to-peer communication session **509** with the placeshifting application **110** on the client device **104** via the network **506** and transmit or otherwise provide **716** the encoded content stream for the identified media program with the desired encoding format to the placeshifting application **110** via the peer-to-peer communication session **509**. Thereafter, the viewer may manipulate or otherwise interact **718** with the placeshifting application **110** on the client device **104** to initiate playback of the placeshifted media program or store the placeshifted media program on the client device **104** for subsequent viewing. As described above, the display status metadata captured by the media device **106** may be utilized to correlate the playback on the client device **104**, such that the placeshifted media program may be presented on the client device **104** concurrently and/or substantially in sync with the instance of the media program on the primary display device **102**. Alternatively, playback of the placeshifted media program on the client device **104** may resume at the same location within the media program that was presented on the primary display device **102** at the time of the placeshifting request, such that the media program is effectively transferred from the primary display device **102** to the client device **104** via the content server **502**.

By virtue of the subject matter described herein, a media program presented on a primary display device, such as a television, maybe transferred or placeshifted from the primary display device to a secondary display device substantially in real-time via a “on-demand” peer-to-peer communication session established with the secondary display device in response to a placeshifting request. In this regard, by pairing the secondary display device with the media device associated with the primary display device, identification information for the secondary display device may be utilized to establish the peer-to-peer communication session and facilitate placeshifting with limited user interaction required. For example, as described above, when the media device associated with the primary display device is capable of detecting or otherwise recognizing a placeshifting request gesture, the viewer of the primary display device merely performs the placeshifting request gesture to initiate transfer of the media program concurrently being presented on the primary display device to the paired secondary display device. To begin playback of the placeshifted media program on the secondary display device, the viewer does not need to manually input login information or other authorization information, manually locate or otherwise select the media program for presentation, or manually advance a selected media program to a location within the media program to which the viewer has already progressed. Rather, a placeshifting application on the secondary display device may allow the viewer to control playback or otherwise manage the placeshifted media program on the secondary display device with reduced manual overhead (i.e., without

requiring user logins, user selection of the media program, fast-forwarding and/or rewinding, etc.).

The general systems, structures and techniques described above may be inter-combined, enhanced, modified and/or otherwise implemented to provide any number of different features. In particular, the term “exemplary” is used herein to represent one example, instance or illustration that may have any number of alternates. Any implementation described herein as “exemplary” should not necessarily be construed as preferred or advantageous over other implementations.

The subject matter may be described herein in terms of functional and/or logical block components, and with reference to symbolic representations of operations, processing tasks, and functions that may be performed by various computing components or devices. It should be appreciated that the various block components shown in the figures may be realized by any number of hardware, software, and/or firmware components configured to perform the specified functions. For example, an embodiment of a system or a component may employ various integrated circuit components, e.g., memory elements, digital signal processing elements, logic elements, look-up tables, or the like, which may carry out a variety of functions under the control of one or more microprocessors or other control devices. Furthermore, the connecting lines shown in the various figures contained herein are intended to represent exemplary functional relationships and/or physical couplings between the various elements. It should be noted that many alternative or additional functional relationships or physical connections may be present in an embodiment of the subject matter. In addition, certain terminology may also be used herein for the purpose of reference only, and thus are not intended to be limiting. For example, terms such as “first,” “second” and other such numerical terms referring to structures do not imply a sequence or order unless clearly indicated by the context.

While several exemplary embodiments have been presented in the foregoing detailed description, it should be appreciated that a vast number of alternate but equivalent variations exist, and the examples presented herein are not intended to limit the scope, applicability, or configuration of the invention in any way. To the contrary, various changes may be made in the function and arrangement of the various features described herein without departing from the scope of the claims and their legal equivalents. Accordingly, details of the exemplary embodiments or other limitations described above should not be read into the claims absent a clear intention to the contrary.

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

storing, by a set-top box (STB) coupled to a primary display device, identification information for a secondary device coupled to a local network supporting communications within a vicinity of the STB;

receiving, by the STB, a request to transfer a media program available for presentation via the STB, wherein the identification information is stored prior to the request to transfer the media program; and

in response to the request:

automatically establishing, by the STB, a communication session with the secondary device over the local network using the identification information; and

automatically transferring, by the STB, an encoded content stream corresponding to the media program to the secondary device via the communication session over the local network.

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2. The method of claim 1, the media program being available for presentation on the primary display device in a first format, wherein the encoded content stream has a second format that is different from the first format.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising generating, 5 by the STB, the encoded content stream having the second format in response to the request.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein generating the encoded content stream comprises the STB converting a first content stream corresponding to the media program from the first 10 format to the second format.

5. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
determining a device type for the secondary device based on the identification information for the secondary device; and

determining the second format based on the device type. 15

6. The method of claim 2, the first format corresponding to a broadcast encoding format, the method further comprising the STB converting a content stream corresponding to the media program received from a broadcast source from the first format to the encoded content stream having the 20 second format.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing, by the STB, a first content stream corresponding to the media program to the primary display device, wherein the encoded content stream comprises the first content stream encapsulated for transmission over the local network. 25

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
detecting, by the STB, presence of the secondary device in a vicinity of the STB; and

obtaining, by the STB, the identification information from the secondary device in response to detecting the presence of the secondary device. 30

9. The method of claim 1, the STB being coupled to the local network, the method further comprising:

detecting, by the STB, the secondary device on the local network; and

obtaining, by the STB, the identification information from the secondary device via the local network prior to storing the identification information, wherein the STB establishes the communication session with the secondary device over the local network using the identification information in response to the request and transfers the encoded content stream to the secondary device via the communication session between the STB 45 and the secondary device.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

obtaining, by the STB in response to the request, display status information for the media program on the primary display device when the request is received; and 50 transferring the display status information to the secondary device, wherein presentation of the media program on the secondary device is influenced by the display status information.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining, 55 by the STB in response to the request, display status information indicating a portion of the media program presented on the primary display device when the request is received, wherein transferring the encoded content stream comprises providing the portion of the media program at a beginning of the encoded content stream transferred to the secondary device such that the portion of the media program is initially presented on the secondary device when playback of the media program on the secondary device is initiated. 60

12. A method of placeshifting a media program to a 65 second device paired with a set-top box (STB) over a local network, the method comprising:

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receiving, by a server, identification information for the second device from the STB after the second device has been paired with the STB,

receiving, by the server, a request to transfer the media program available for presentation on a primary display device via the STB paired with the second device, the second device being paired with the STB prior to the request;

in response to the request:

establishing, by the server, a communication session between the second device and the server over a network using the identification information for the second device paired with the STB; and

transferring, by the server, an encoded content stream corresponding to the media program from the server to the second device via the communication session. 15

13. The method of claim 12, the media program being available for presentation on the primary display device in a first format via the STB, wherein the encoded content stream has a second format that is different from the first format. 20

14. The method of claim 13, further comprising:

determining, by the server, a device type for the second device based on the identification information for the second device; and

determining, by the server, the second format based on the device type. 25

15. The method of claim 13, further comprising:

determining, by the server, one or more performance characteristics of the network between the server and the second device; and

determining, by the server, the second format based on the one or more performance characteristics of the network. 30

16. The method of claim 13, further comprising converting, by the server, a content stream corresponding to the media program from a content source into a content file having a different encoding format. 35

17. The method of claim 13, the first format corresponding to a broadcast encoding format, the method further comprising the server converting a content stream received from a broadcast source into a content file having a different encoding format. 40

18. The method of claim 12, further comprising receiving, by the server from the STB, metadata describing a display status of the media program on the primary display device, wherein the server transfers the encoded content stream to the second device in accordance with the metadata. 45

19. A set-top box (STB) comprising:

a first interface configured to provide a first content stream corresponding to a media program to a primary display device, the first content stream having a first format;

a network interface configured to communicate via a local network;

a data storage element configured to store identification information for a paired secondary device communicatively coupled to the local network;

an input element configured to receive a placeshifting request; and

a control module coupled to the data storage element, the input element, and the network interface, wherein in response to the placeshifting request, the control module is configured to automatically establish a communication session with the paired secondary device over the local network using the stored identification information and automatically transfer a second content stream corresponding to the media program to the 65

paired secondary device via the communication session, the second content stream having a second format different from the first format.

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